DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 310 812 JC 890 418

AUTHOR Halpin, Richard L.
TITLE A Study of Advisement Systems for Part-Time Students in SUNY Community Colleges.
INSTITUTION State Univ. of New York, Albany. Two Year Coll. Development Center.
SPONS AGENCY Jefferson Community Coll., Louisville, Ky.; New York State Education Dept., Albany. Bureau of Grants Administration.
PUB DATE Jun 89
NOTE 32p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Advising; Community Colleges; Day Students; Educational Counseling; *Evening Students; Interviews; Outreach Programs; *Part Time Students; Program Evaluation; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *State University of New York

ABSTRACT

In the spring of 1989, a study was conducted of the academic advising systems and practices in place for part-time students at 27 State University of New York (SUNY) community colleges. The purpose of the study was to gather information on the advising systems and to determine if adult, part-time, evening students had the same access to advisement as full-time day students. Personal interviews were conducted with 30 faculty/staff members at the colleges who were responsible for the academic advisement of part-time students. An analysis of responses revealed the following: (1) part-time students compose 51.5% of SUNY community college enrollment; (2) few outreach programs exist for part-time students attending in the evening, at which time the extent of academic advising seems to be limited to "having someone available"; (3) students who attend classes at extension sites appear to be better served as a result of the specific assignment of advising responsibilities to a site coordinator; (4) many colleges have instituted evening advisement centers to increase student-staff contact and thereby increase the retention rate of part-time students; (5) in about one-half of the colleges, the administrative structure for the advisement of full-time, matriculated students is the same as for part-time, matriculated students; and (6) the most common response to the question of what improvements the interviewees would make was "to have greater evening and weekend availability of advisement". Appendixes include the letter of introduction and the interview questionnaire. (VVC)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED310812

# A Study of Advisement Systems for Part-Time Students in SUNY Community Colleges

by

Richard L. Halpin, Ed.D.
Jefferson Community College

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

L. M. Fadale

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

June 1989

This research project was supported by
Jefferson Community College

and

Perkins Vocational Education Act funds
administered by
Two-Year College Development Center
University at Albany

in cooperation with the

Bureau of Postsecondary Grants Administration
New York State Education Department

JC 290 412



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Preface

This report is a summary of the information collected during the spring 1989 semester about advisement systems and practices for part-time students currently in place at 27 of the 30 SUNY community colleges.

I believe the information contained herein is interesting and potentially useful to faculty, professional staff, administrators, and other shapers of campus policies and practices. Hopefully, the first person, informal style in which I have chosen to write will reflect my enthusiasm for the subject, and will make the report "reader friendly" as well.

I gratefully acknowledge the support of Jefferson Community College, the Two-Year College Development Center of the University at Albany, and the 30+ interviewees from whom the information was collected.

I invite your questions, comments, corrections, and other responses.

Richard L. Halpin

## Table of Contents


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Preface | ii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Significance of the Study | 2 |
| Method | 3 |
| Results | 8 |
| Conclusion | 22 |
| Appendix | 25 |


## Tables


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Table 1 | - Positions of the Interviewees; and frequency with which the various positions were represented. | 6 |
| Table II | - Primary Interviewee and Position. | 7 |
| Table III | - Administrative Responsibility for Part-time Student Advisement | 10 |
| Table IV | - Comparison of Advisement of Full-time vs Part-time Matriculated Students: The "Same" vs "Different" Systems | 12 |
| Table V | - Academic Advisement: Perceived as an Academic Affairs or a Student Affairs Function? | 12 |
| Table VI | - Who Actually Does Advisement for Part-time Students | 13 |
| Table VII | - Colleges that Maintain Advisement Files or Readily Accessible Information for Part-Time Students. | 15 |
| Table VIII | - Assessment or Placement Testing for Part-time Students. | 17 |
| Table IX | - If You Could Make Improvements in your System of Advisement for Part-Time Students: | 20 |

Introduction

As one of the several activities associated with a sabbatical leave from Jefferson Community College during the spring 1989 semester, I undertook a study of the academic advising systems and practices in place for part-time students in upstate SUNY community colleges.

I originally proposed this study for several reasons. These were: 1) at Jefferson, we were reviewing our system of part-time student advisement, and we needed information about practices at other colleges; 2) I have long had a personal interest in academic advisement; 3) I have long had an interest in "returning adult," often evening attending, part-time students; and 4) I had a hunch, that I wanted to confirm or disconfirm, that part-time, evening attending adult students might not have the same access to and quality of advisement that more traditional, day attending, full-time students have.

My hunch concerning the advisement of part-time students was generally confirmed. At the same time, I became aware of several excellent, carefully constructed advisement systems and practices that have been created in some colleges to serve the part-time student population.

The purpose of this report is to describe the study as I carried it out, and to share the information I gained. One important finding that I want to stress at the outset is this: many community colleges have developed excellent systems of part-time student advisement, yet there seems to be very little general awareness from campus to campus of these good solutions to the common problem. The practice of campus based, insular problem solving seems entrenched and pervasive. We need to communicate with each other, and learn from each other.

Significance of the Study

Academic advisement of part-time students is likely to become more important--educationally and economically--during the next decade. Over half of all SUNY students enrolled in credit-bearing classes are enrolled at community colleges, and over half of all SUNY community college students are enrolled on a part-time basis. Allen Bloom might not like it, but every indication is that the trend toward increasing proportions of part-time students will continue into the foreseeable future.

Community colleges, and colleges in general, have become very concerned about retention during the past decade. There is good evidence that the cornerstone of a good retention program is the development of a sense of integration, or affiliation, or connectedness to the college by the students. In community colleges, especially, the key to the development of a sense of integration seems to be based on frequent and positive interaction of students with college faculty and staff (see V. Tinto, Leaving College, 1987, for an excellent discussion of this topic).

One mechanism by which college faculty/staff and students may be brought into more regular, recurring, meaningful contact is through academic advisement systems. However, most advisement systems are developed with full-time, day-attending students in mind. The advisement of part-time students is generally much less systematic and predictable. It is also much more dependent on student initiative.

If we are concerned about retention (or perhaps reenrollment is a better term) of part-time students, then we need to create opportunities for regular, recurring, positive interaction between the part-time students and college faculty/staff. The advisement system seems like an excellent vehicle for us to use to accomplish that objective.

The advisement system, then, could be used to increase the frequency and regularity of student-faculty/staff contact, which may lead to a greater feeling of integration by part-time students, which may translate into increased rates of reenrollment.

There is a second reason why attention to advisement may be important. Traditionally, many college officials have assumed that full-time, traditional students need academic information and guidance, whereas the part-time adult students have no academic confusion, and need primarily to be left alone. Adult students reinforce this notion when they do not take advantage of advisement opportunities that are strictly optional. However, based on logic as well as nearly 20 years of experience as a teacher of evening courses, I believe that such assumptions are often incorrect. In many, many cases, adult part-time students are in great need of good academic information, degree planning, goal clarification and private discussions with college faculty and staff. Good advisement is a component of a quality education. This is as true for part-time as it is for full-time students.

Advisement systems for part-time students deserve our attention, then, for two reasons: 1) the advisement system may be used to foster integration, which leads to increased rates of reenrollment, and 2) advisement is a component of good education, to which we are all committed.

## Method

When I initially began to think about this project, I envisioned a fairly typical written questionnaire, to be distributed to each SUNY community college campus, as my primary method of data collection. It

became apparent, however, that for several reasons this plan would not work. Every campus has different arrangements regarding responsibility for part-time students. "Advisement" means different things to people on different campuses. Even "part-time student" means different things in different places.

On some campuses, I found that the primary distinction among students when it comes to advisement is full-time versus part-time. At others, it is day attending versus evening attending. In other places, matriculated versus non-matriculated is a critical advisement distinction. On other campuses, the primary distinction is between older versus younger students. Finally, on some campuses advisement is so decentralized that every department has its own system, so that no one on campus has a vantage point from which they can describe and discuss "the system."

Recognizing the inappropriateness of a written questionnaire, I identified three alternatives: 1) give up on the project; 2) conduct in-depth telephone interviews; or 3) travel to as many campuses as possible and conduct face-to-face semi-structured interviews with whomever on campus was most knowledgeable about academic advisement of part-time students.

I chose option three. During the spring 1989 semseter, I was able to travel to all 27 community colleges north of New York City. Although time consuming and expensive, I believe it was the only effective way to collect the information I wanted.

The experience of visiting 27 campuses within a three-month period was an education in itself. Incidents such as the absolute courtesy and helpfulness of the security guard at Westchester Community College made an immediate, positive, long-lasting impression on me. And the

pure rudeness of a faculty member at another community college has - rightly or wrongly - permanently colored my feelings about that institution.

The visits also allowed me to see my own campus with "new eyes." I recognize both positive and not-so-positive first-impression-molding attributes. I wonder about the impressions prospective students and their family members form during their first half-hour on any of our campuses. But that is a separate discussion unto itself.

Having decided to visit each campus, I then began to identify the appropriate campus official with whom to make contact. Generally, I telephoned the office of either the Chief Academic Affairs Officer or the Chief Student Affairs Officer. Typically, he or she would then offer to make an appointment with me, or would refer me to some other more appropriate official. Gene Winter, Director of the Two-Year College Development Center, also sent a preliminary letter to each campus, describing the project and alerting people that I would be contacting the college.

There were several different positions represented among the interviewees. The most common interviewee positions were: chief continuing education officer (7), director of counseling (6) and chief student affairs officer (or assistant) (5). Table 1 summarizes the positions of the interviewees and the frequency of each position represented.

The actual people interviewed at each college, and their positions are listed in Table II.

The interviews generally lasted about 1½ hours, with a range of 1 hour to longer than 3 hours. The interviews were a positive and pleasant experience for me; and I believe the interviewees generally enjoyed the opportunity to pull back from their daily routines and think

Table I

Positions of the Interviewees; and frequency with which the various positions were represented.

| | |
|---|---|
| Chief Continuing Education Officer | 7 |
| Director of Counseling | 6 |
| Chief Student Affairs Officer (or Assistant) | 5 |
| Chief Academic Affairs Officer (or Assistant) | 3 |
| Registrar | 3 |
| Director/Coordinator of Advisement | 2 |
| Other* | 4 |

(*one each:
Dean of Evening Administration
Counselor
Director of Developmental Studies
Coordinator of Educational Planning)

(Totals exceed 27 due to some joint interviews)

Table II

Primary Interviewee and Position

| | |
|---|---|
| Adirondack | Ms. Ann M. Attanasio, Associate Dean for Continuing Education |
| Broome | Ms. Barbara Bell, Staff Associate to Vice President for Academic Affairs |
| Cayuga | Mr. Jeffrey P. Delbel, Dean, Enrollment & Student Develop. |
| Clinton | Mr. Michael Schwartz, Associate Dean for Continuing Education |
| Columbia-Greene | Mr. Richard Schmonsky, Chair, Department of Counseling |
| Corning | Ms. Chris Hosley, Counseling Coordinator; also Ms. Jean Aronson, Director of Continuing Education |
| Dutchess | Ms. Deborah Weibman, Registrar |
| Erie | Dr. John D. Rydzik, Dean, Evening Administration |
| Finger Lakes | Ms. Nancy Purdy, Registrar |
| Fulton-Montgomery | Dr. Donald L. Nichter, Dean, Student & Community Services |
| Genesee | Ms. Ann Henderson, Assistant Dean, Records & Academic Support |
| Herkimer | Ms. Barbara Wiederkehr, Director of Community Education |
| Hudson Valley | Ms. Holly A. Christensen, Director of Continuing Education |
| Jamestown | Dr. Marilyn Zagora, Director of Student Services; also Mr. Robert Barker, Associate Dean for Continuing Education |
| Jefferson | Mr. Rene Valentine, Dean for Continuing Education |
| Mohawk Valley | Mr. Merlen Ward, Executive Assistant to Vice President for Instruction |
| Monroe | Mr. James Terrell, Director of Counseling and Testing |
| Niagara | Dr. Ish Munjal, Coordinator of Advisement |
| North Country | Dr. Gail R. Rice, Dean for Academic & Student Affairs |
| Onondaga | Ms. Connie Saldico, Chair, Department of Counseling |
| Orange | Dr. Herbert Cohen, Director of Counseling |
| Rockland | Ms. Barbara Kase, Coordinator of Educational Planning |
| Schenectady | Dr. Peggy King, Assistant Dean for Student Development |
| Sullivan | Dr. Vionna Mueller, Director of Developmental Studies |
| Tompkins-Cortland | Mr. Deane Knox, Coordinator of Academic Advisement |
| Ulster | Mr. James F. Quirk, Director of Counseling; also Division Chairs |
| Westchester | Dr. Nada Beth Glick, Director of Counseling & Student Develop. |

about advisement systems. I learned this: the SUNY community colleges have accrued an impressive roster of bright, dedicated, hard-working committed professionals at every level of the administrative structure. I wish more people had the opportunity to visit the campuses and meet the people who comprise the SUNY community college system, as I did during the spring 1989 semster.

Results

The actual interview schedule is included in the appendix to this report. In this section, I will describe my findings for several of the questions included on that questionnaire. If anyone needs specific or more detailed information, please contact me at Jefferson Community College.

As I began to actually write this final report, I reviewed all of my notes and attempted to identify my larger impressions and conclusions. A synthesis of my findings and the overarching conclusions are as follows:

1. In the entire SUNY system, for fall 1988, there were:

| | |
|---|---|
| 341,404 | - students enrolled in credit courses |
| 175,374 (51.4%) | - of these were at community colleges |
| 90,273 (51.5%) | - of these were enrolled "part-time" |
| 28,390 | - were "Non-matriculated" |

More than half of SUNY's enrollment was in its community colleges; more than half of all community college students were enrolled part-time, over 28,000 were not enrolled in a specific program. (SUNY Office of Institutional Research, No. 172, March 24, 1989.)

2. The least well served population of community college students in terms of academic advising, appears to be the

evening-attending, part-time, non-matriculated students.

3. Most colleges, either through the counseling center or continuing education operation, have someone "on duty" evenings to "be available" to respond to any questions or concerns that a student might initiate.

4. "Having someone available" seems to be the extent to which most colleges go to provide academic advisement to the evening-attending, part-time, non-matriculated students. Students must seek out advisement; most colleges do not provide much outreach or any systematic review of the educational progress of these students.

5. Ironically, in many cases, students who attend classes at extension sites, rather than on campus, appear to be better served. This is probably a result of specific assignment of advisement responsibilities, as one of several management/student services duties, to a site coordinator. On campus, the responsibility for advisement may be much less clear (more diffused) to both the faculty and students.

6. A number of colleges have established specific arrangements or organizational structures to provide more accessible advisement services to evening-attending, part-time non-matriculated students. These are detailed later (p. 21-22) in this report.

In the following pages, I will describe my findings relative to several specific issues or questions from my interviews.

a) Administrative responsibility for part-time student advisement.

Previously, I described the people interviewed and their positions. These people were not always the individuals who had the direct administrative responsibility for the activity. Table III lists the position

Table III

Administrative Responsibility for Part-time Student Advisement

(This table does not necessarily indicate who does the advisement; it indicates where the responsibility for advisement rests.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Adirondack | Student Services Division |
| Broome | Matriculated part-time students-- Departments; Non-matriculated part-time-- Information Center |
| Cayuga | "Day" part-time assigned to faculty advisor; "night" part-time may see a counselor |
| Clinton | Associate Dean for Continuing Education |
| Columbia-Greene | Chair, Counseling (Coordinator, advising team) |
| Corning | Director of Continuing Education |
| Dutchess | Associate Dean of Students |
| Erie | Staff of Evening Information Centers |
| Finger Lakes | Dean of Instruction (somewhat ambiguous for non-matriculated part-time) |
| Fulton-Montgomery | Director of Counseling |
| Genesee | Assistant Dean, Academic Support Services |
| Herkimer | Dean of Students |
| Hudson Valley | Matriculated students--Department Chairs; Non-matriculated--Continuing Education |
| Jamestown | Continuing Education Division |
| Jefferson | Dean for Continuing Education |
| Mohawk Valley | Department Heads (ambiguous for non-matriculated) |
| Monroe | Director of Counseling |
| Niagara | Coordinator of Academic Advisement |
| North Country | Ambiguous responsibility for part-time students |
| Onondaga | Chair, Counseling Department |
| Orange | Director of Counseling |
| Rockland | Coordinator of Educational Planning |
| Schenectady | Assistant Dean, Student Development Services |
| Sullivan | Director of Developmental Studies |
| Tompkins-Cortland | Coordinator of Academic Advisement |
| Ulster | Assistant to Dean of Instruction |
| Westchester | Director of Counseling and Student Development |

title responsible for academic advisement of part-time students at each campus, according to my interviewees. The table indicates that there is a great deal of diversity among the SUNY community colleges in the way in which they structure responsibility for part-time advisement.

In about one-half of the SUNY community colleges, the administrative structure in place for full-time, matriculated student advisement is the same as for the part-time matriculated students. In other cases, different administrative structures are in place. Table IV lists colleges that use essentially "same" and "different" administrative structures.

b) Perception of academic advisement: A student affairs or academic affairs function?

Apparently, the proper campus "location" for academic advisement - Academic Affairs or Student Affairs - has been at various times a lively issue on some campuses. Nationwide, during the last decade, there has been a trend for advisement, generally, to move back toward the academic affairs side of the house.

I asked my interviewees this question: "Among the professional staff at this college, is advisement perceived as more of a student affairs or more of an academic affairs function?" For some respondents, the answer for their campus was so obvious that the question itself seemed odd. Other interviewees had to muse on the question for a while. On most campuses, advisement is perceived as an academic affairs responsibility. Table V summarizes the responses to this question.

c) Delivery of part-time students advisement services.

I asked my respondents to identify the people by position who actually carry out the task of part-time student advisement. These results are displayed in Table VI. Again, there was a great diversity of response. In many cases, the answer really seemed to be that everyone who was on the professional staff could help these students - at least for the registration

Table IV

Comparison of Advisement of Full-time vs Part-time Matriculated Students: The "Same" vs "Different" Systems

| Use Same Advisement System (12) | Use Different Advisement System (15) |
|---|---|
| Columbia-Greene | Clinton |
| Jamestown | North Country |
| Fulton-Montgomery | Adirondack |
| Hudson Valley | Corning |
| Mohawk Valley | Broome |
| Westchester | Tompkins-Cortland |
| Orange | Cayuga (evening) |
| Rockland | Schenectady |
| Ulster | Herkimer |
| Onondaga | Dutchess |
| Monroe | Sullivan |
| Niagara | Finger Lakes |
| | Genesee |
| | Erie |
| | Jefferson |

Table V

Academic Advisement: Perceived as an Academic Affairs or a Student Affairs function?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Academic Affairs: | 16 | (59%) |
| Student Affairs: | 4 | (15%) |
| Unclear Distinction: | 7 | (26%) |
| | 27 | |

Table VI

Who Actually Does Advisement for Part-time Students

| | |
|---|---|
| Adirondack | Counselors |
| Broome | Evening information center coordinator; faculty |
| Cayuga | Evening counselors, faculty |
| Clinton | Staff of Continuing Education Division, faculty, counselors |
| Columbia-Greene | Advising team for matriculated; non-matriculated not in system |
| Corning | Counselors, faculty, Director of Continuing Education |
| Dutchess | Registrar counselors (academic advisors) |
| Erie | Staff of evening information centers |
| Finger Lakes | Counselors, faculty, developmental studies staff |
| Fulton-Montgomery | Academic advising team |
| Genesee | Academic advisors, Associate Dean Off-Campus Studies |
| Herkimer | Division chairs, counselors, faculty |
| Hudson Valley | Faculty (matriculated); continuing education staff (non-matriculated) |
| Jamestown | Counselors, faculty, directors of extension centers |
| Jefferson | Continuing education division staff, faculty |
| Mohawk Valley | Faculty |
| Monroe | Counseling Center staff; faculty; peer advisors |
| Niagara | Academic advisement center staff; faculty |
| North Country | Faculty, learning lab staff |
| Onondaga | Counselors, faculty |
| Orange | Counselors, faculty |
| Rockland | Counselors, faculty, peer advisors, adjunct counselors |
| Schenectady | Paraprofessional advisors, student development staff |
| Sullivan | Department chairs |
| Tompkins-Cortland | Advisement Center staff; extension center staff |
| Ulster | Faculty |
| Westchester | Counselors (self-advisement possible) |

component of the advisement process. In many cases, the fact that "everyone does it" illustrates the lack of a real system. Without a system, we cannot assure access, quality or consistencey of advisement.

One observation that I would make is that the counseling/student development staffs seem to be more involved in the advisement of part-time students than of full-time students. In some cases I have the impression that this is more by default than by design.

d) Availability of student information to assist advisors.

I asked the interviewees if the college systematically maintained advisement "files" or if there was any other sort of tracking system with ready access to student information for advisors of part-time, especially non-matricualted students. Twelve of the 27 colleges answered affirmatively, ranging from 24 hour on-line student data bases to manila folders that were actually available to advisors during evening hours. Table VII lists the 12 colleges which indicated that they had readily accessible student advisement information.

Especially interesting to me were the locally-created computerized advisement information systems at Jamestown, Monroe and Orange. Several other colleges are moving toward such systems. As long as such systems are used as tools to assist in the advisement process, and not as reasons to reduce student/staff contact, I see their development as extremely positive.

Table VII

Colleges that Maintain Advisement Files or Readily Accessible Information for Part-Time Students

Broome

Cayuga

Columbia-Greene

Dutchess

Fulton-Montgomery

Genesee

Herkimer

Monroe

Orange

Schenectady

Ulster

Westchester

e) Assessment/placement testing for part-time students.

Most colleges are now doing assessment/placement testing for full-time, matriculated students. Most would agree that those results are valuable to a good advisor as he/she discusses course options and success strategies with students. These placement tests generally cover the areas of reading skills, writing skills and computational/mathematics skills.

I asked the interviewees about the availability of these tests for part-time students. The typical situation is that the tests are available, but not required, for part-time students. I did not collect data regarding the percentage of part-time students who actually avail themselves of these tests; my impression is that generally participation is low.

Table VIII summarizes the practices of the 27 community colleges in this study relative to placement testing for part-time students.

f) "Institutional Activity" regarding academic advisement.

I asked my respondents if there had been any recent "institutional activity" regarding advisement issues - especially part-time advisement. I explained "institution activity" to mean task forces, ad hoc study groups, administrative, faculty or trustee initiatives, or the like. More than half (15) of the respondents indicated that indeed there was some of that sort of current campus activity, and on several campuses advisement was one of the year's "big issues."

Among the 12 colleges where there was no such activity, in some cases the respondents reported that in the recent past major changes and adjustments in advisement had occurred, and the college was generally well satisfied. In other cases, advisement is simply not currently, nor has it been in the recent past, a priority issue of the campus.

Table VIII

Assessment or Placement Testing for Part-time Students

| | |
|---|---|
| Adirondack | Available, not required |
| Broome | Available, not required |
| Cayuga | Available, not required |
| Clinton | Required before English and math course registration |
| Columbia-Greene | Required for those out of school more than five years |
| Corning | Required before English or math course registration |
| Dutchess | Required before English course registration |
| Erie | Required after 12 hours |
| Finger Lakes | Available, not required |
| Fulton-Montgomery | Available, not required |
| Genesee | Available; reading test required after 24 hours |
| Herkimer | Available, not required |
| Hudson Valley | Available, not required |
| Jamestown | Must take English Placement Test before English course |
| Jefferson | Available, not required |
| Mohawk Valley | Required |
| Monroe | Required of "day" part-time; available for evening |
| Niagara | Generally required |
| North Country | Not required |
| Onondaga | Required before English or math course registration |
| Orange | Available, required for matriculation |
| Rockland | Required after 15 credits |
| Schenectady | Available, not required |
| Sullivan | Available, not required |
| Tompkins-Cortland | Generally required |
| Ulster | Available, not required |
| Westchester | Available, at discretion of counselor |

g) Training and/or evaluation of advisors.

I asked the interviewees about the current situation regarding training and evaluation of advisors. Virtually every college (24) reported some advisement training activity, but no respondent felt that the training was sufficient. Examples of training activities cited included workshops for new staff, advising manuals provided to all new staff, mentoring activities at the department level, and occasional workshops as part of faculty development programs.

Evaluation of advisement and advisors was not common. Only 5 of the 27 colleges reported systematic evaluation of advisement, and these activities ranged from one question on the exit survey, to a specific advisement.satisfaction questionnaire, to an optional advisement reaction form (which would seem to almost insure that only students with a strongly felt complaint will respond!).

Clearly, regular evaluation of advisement and advisors is an issue that campuses may want to tackle. Most campuses collect student perceptions of teaching data; parallel data regarding advisement would seem to be useful for both evaluation, training, and program development.

h) If you could make improvements....

The question that I most enjoyed asking - and that respondents most enjoyed answering - was this: "If you could make improvements in your system of part-time student academic advisement, and if you had no constraints of budget, contract, or institutional inertia, what are some of the things that you would like to do that come to mind?" Generally, people quickly sat forward in their seats and indicated a couple of fairly specific actions. Then they sat back, and thought of a couple more.

Table IX contains a more or less verbatim list of comments. Many replies were very similar, and are merged on the list. These multiple replies are so marked. I believe that this list is great "food for thought" for anyone involved with the education of part-time students.

Incidentially, the overwhelmingly most common response was this: "To have greater evening and weekend availability of advisement."

i) Summary of institutional responses to the advisement needs of part-time students: Frustrations and successes

Academic advisement of part-time students is one of many critical issues facing campus faculties and administrators. Constraints of time, money, space and human resources are real. Not surprisingly, I discovered no perfect institutional responses to the advisement needs of part-time students. I did discover a fascinating array of attempts to meet the advising needs of part-time students, which are listed below.

I also was made aware of a high level of frustration on some campuses by people who are aware of inadequacies in their systems of part-time student advisement. Before I detail some of the "solutions," I will list some of the important, negative comments regarding systems of part-time student advisement that I received:

- "This is the system--students who need help just wander in. We hope."
- "We refer the evening part-time students to the divisions and hope for the best."
- "It looks good on paper, but it's really a 'happenstance' system."
- "We have no system for part-time student advisement. Period."
- "Frankly, it's 'catch as catch can'."
- "Our part-time students are well-served, but it's not because we have a system that insures that, but because we have a great group of people in place at the present time."

Table IX

If You Could Make Improvements in your System of Advisement for Part-Time Students:

+1) Offer freshmen seminar for evening students
+2) More formally link part-time students to particular advisors
3) Improve internal advisee information system
+4) Require advisement contacts at certain points
+5) Mandate advisement system for part-time students; do away with concept of "self-advisement"
6) Have counseling center open every evening
7) Better orientation/first advisement for part-time students
8) Develop individual profile reports for each student
+9) More careful selection of advisors
10) Find ways to increase student use of evening counselors
+11) Establish on-going advisor training program
+12) Institute a reward system for good advisors
+13) Offer special training for part-time, non-traditional student advisement
+14) Assign part-time matriculated students to faculty in their discipline area
15) Create a separate advisement center for use by all students
+16) Establish evening hours in all departments
+17) Be able to hire more people to make the system work better
18) Pay selected faculty for summer advisement
+19) More evening and weekend availability
20) Offer more advisement sessions with fewer students per session
+21) Make the system more intrusive
22) Do away with policy whereby part-time students register last
23) Provide training and compensation for advisement by adjunct instructors (who see a lot of the part-time students, especially in evening)
24) Make placement testing and advisement immediately and continuously available
+25) Establishing a tracking system for all part-time students
+26) Hire a professional advisor to work with the non-traditional, part-time students
+27) More faculty availability for evening advisement
28) Bring part-time, non-matriculated students into the system
29) More advisement at extension sites
+30) Make all campus services available during evening hours
+31) Establish a system of recognition and reward for excellent advisors
32) Establish an on-going registration system
+33) Establish a uniform advisement systems for all students
34) Shift focus away from registration to developmental advising

+ Indicates multiple responses.

- "Our system is one whereby a certain office has responsibility for the advisement of part-time students, but no authority or resources to insure that the job gets done. And the job does not get done!"

- "Frankly, we're not convinced that advisement for part-time, especially non-matriculated students is necessary, desirable, or important at all."

- "An evening student probably won't find who he or she is looking for, but usually there will be someone around."

On the positive side, many colleges have made excellent institutional responses to the advisement needs of part-time students. Many interviewees, while aware of shortcomings, were justifiably proud of what had been developed at their campus. Following is a list, in no particular order, of several of these programs.

*Broome - has established an "Evening Student Information Center" specifically to serve evening, non-matriculated students. Also is developing a mentor/advisor system whereby certain faculty work closely with a small group of non-traditional students.

*Dutchess - within the Office of the Registrar, has created two "Registrar Counselor" (academic advisor) positions, which are responsible for advisement for all part-time students.

*Erie - has created "Evening Information Centers" on each campus, staffed by regular faculty and staff (on an overload basis) to provide advisement services.

*Genesee - has an "Advisement Center" which is open evenings, staffed by professional advisors; makes extensive use of telephone advisement.

*Hudson Valley - the Continuing Education Division has specific responsibility for the advisement of all non-matriculated students; open evenings with trained advisors on duty.

*Columbia-Greene - has an academic advising team, comprised of two counselors and eight faculty members, who do advisement for all matriculated full and part-time students. Non-matriculated part-time students are not "in the system." However, a letter is sent after completion of 15 hours encouraging matriculation.

*Monroe - has developed a sophisticated on-line student information and advisement system, which eliminates a great deal of paperwork and filing. Similar systems also in place at Jamestown and, to a lesser degree, at Orange.

*Rockland - augments their system of counselor-based advisement with a group of "Educational Planners" - faculty who have been selected, trained, and who receive extra compensation for academic advisement.

*Niagara - has established an Academic Advisement Center, which has, as one of several duties, responsibility for non-matriculated part-time students. Also has an institutional "Excellence in Advising" Award.

*Schenectady - has two part-time, well trained paraprofessionals available evenings to provide academic advisement to part-time students.

*Tompkins-Cortland - has established an Academic Advisement Center which provides advisement to all part-time evening students; and coordinates the work of advisors at extension sites as well.

*Orange - has an advisement system whose strength is redundancy. Matriculated students all have faculty advisors. Additionally, there is an advising team, comprised of a few faculty and counselors, which provides backup to the faculty system, especially during evenings, free hours, periods when classes are not in session, and during registration periods. Additionally, the counseling center provides advisement to non-matriculated and developmental studies students, and others who may stop by.

## Conclusion

The academic advisement of part-time students is likely to become increasingly important during the next decade, as part-time--especially evening-attending, non-traditional, often non-matriculated--students comprise a greater proportion of the student body at many community colleges. The issue of advisement is under discussion at the majority of the 27 community college campuses surveyed for this study.

My interviews revealed both a high level of frustration and even embarrassment regarding institutional provisions for the advisement of part-time students as well as a fascinating array of individual campus responses to the problem of part-time student advisement. Both the frustrations and the creative solutions are described in this report.

I was struck by the common concern with advisement from campus to campus, yet with nearly complete reliance on local, "home-grown" solutions to this common problem. We could all benefit from greater exchange of ideas, information and solutions to this issue of advisement, and I suspect to other problems as well. "None of us is as smart as all of us."

It is my hope that this report will be of genuine assistance to faculty and administrators concerned with advisement programs for part-time students. This is a unique document that pulls together comprehensive information on a specific campus issue.

By design, I have not included specific recommendations for practice in this report. I certainly expected to do so at the outset of this project, but I believe now that it would be presumptuous. Every campus is different, with unique blends of people, history, programs, geography, size and mission. However, I do intend to offer recommendations at my own campus and I would invite readers of this report to use the information contained herein to do the same at their campuses.

I invite responses, questions or comments. I really do enjoy discussing students and advisement--even after completing this project! I can be reached at Jefferson Community College (315/782-5250), Social Science Department, Watertown, New York 13601.

APPENDIX

UNIVERSITY AT
ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Two Year College Development Center
518 442 5590

Draper 306
Albany, New York
12222

TO: Chief Academic Affairs Officers
Chief Student Affairs Officers
Continuing Education Officers
of SUNY Community Colleges

FROM: Gene M. Winter, Director
Two-Year College Development Center

DATE: February 8, 1989

I am sending this letter to make you aware of a study that will be conducted during the coming months, under the auspices of the Two-Year College Development Center. The study will focus on advisement systems that are now in place to serve part-time adult students in credit-bearing courses. The project will be carried out by Dr. Richard L. Halpin, a faculty member at Jefferson Community College, who is on sabbatical leave for the spring 1989 semester.

During the next few weeks, Dr. Halpin will be contacting appropriate officials at selected SUNY community colleges to arrange for a campus visit for the purpose of collecting information on systems and procedures used in part-time student advisement. I trust that you will cooperate with Dr. Halpin as he studies a topic that is of interest and value to all of us. A report of the findings will be distributed by the Two-Year College Development Center later this year.

If you have any questions, please contact me (518/442-5590) or Dick Halpin at 315/639-6216. Thank you.

Interview Schedule - Part-time Student Advisement Survey

Dr. Richard L. Halpin
Spring, 1989

1. College _____

2. Date _____ 2. a. Enrollment: Full-time _____

Part-time _____

3. Person(s) Interviewed _____

4. Position _____

5. a. Who is administratively responsible for FT student advisement? _____

b. Who is administratively responsible for PT student advisement? _____

c. Is advisement perceived as a student affairs or academic affairs function? _____

6. a. Who <u>does</u> FT student advisement?

b. Who <u>does</u> PT student advisement?

7. How is a student assigned to an advisor?

8. Are there different systems for matriculated and non-matriculated students?

9. What is involved in a typical advisement session for PT students?

10. a. Do you maintain a tracking system (advisement files) for PT students?

b. Do you do assessment testing for part-time students?

11. Has there been any "institutional activity" recently regarding PT student advisement?

12. Any special arrangements for students with limited proficiency in English? Yes No

If so, what?

13. Do you currently have a credit-bearing freshman seminar/orientations program?

Yes Required?

No

14. Does your college have a philosophy statement on advising?_____ (Get a copy, if yes.)

15. Do you have computer-assisted advisement available? Yes No

16. Is there any attempt to train and/or evaluate part-time advisement? Yes No

If yes, describe.

17. If you could make improvements in your system of part-time student advisement, what might you do?

18. Summarize the system of part-time student advisement in place at this institution.

Request: _____catalog

_____evening course brochure

_____advisement pamphlet

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

19. Review of the system:

ERIC Clearinghouse for
Junior Colleges OCT 20 1989